

Remember, what America makes and grows, makes and grows America.

HONORING VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

HON. MICHAEL CLOUD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 2023

Mr. CLOUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and thank the Vietnam veterans and their families for their service and bravery to defend this country. On Wednesday, we observed Vietnam Veterans Day, a day to pause and remember the sacrifice and heroism of our veterans in one of our country's longest and most difficult conflicts.

We observe National Vietnam Veterans Day on March 29th to pay tribute to the 9 million Americans who served during this era. This year, March 29 is not only National Vietnam Veterans Day, but it is also the 50th anniversary of March 29, 1973, the day the United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam was disestablished, and the day the last U.S. combat troops departed Vietnam. In addition, on and around this same day Hanoi released the last of its acknowledged prisoners of war.

We are blessed to enjoy the freedom and security in this country today because of the sacrifice and service of veterans like these. As elected representatives, we have no higher duty than to ensure our nation's heroes receive the recognition they have earned and to commemorate the 58,000 soldiers that never made it home.

We cannot express our gratitude enough for all the Americans who served in Vietnam. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Vietnam veterans not just on this day, but every day. Our nation is forever in their debt.

BULGARIA ADVANCES ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 2023

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Elias Gedeon, senior vice president for Westinghouse Energy Systems, for signing a Memorandum of Understanding to commence preparation for the probable deployment of at least one of their AP1000 reactors to Bulgaria's Kozloduy nuclear power plant.

Kozloduy NPP-Newbuild, with chairman Georgy Kirkov, has undertaken the project, implemented March 1st, to build the new reactors at the site, ensure the licensing and structure comply with regulations, while also achieving Bulgaria's nuclear energy goals.

"This cooperative agreement sets us up on a path toward providing both economic and environmental benefits from the Bulgarian people while bolstering the country's energy security," stated David Durham, Energy Systems President for Westinghouse.

As chairman of the Bulgarian Caucus, I appreciate President of Bulgaria Rumen Radev on the significant development made towards reaching the country's nuclear energy goals.

RECOGNIZING PETE REED

HON. ANDY KIM

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 2023

Mr. KIM of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise along with my colleague, Rep. FRANK PALONE, to honor the life and selfless service of Pete Reed. Pete was a beloved part of the Bordentown, New Jersey community. He was a Marine Corps veteran who was killed in Ukraine last month while volunteering on a humanitarian mission. Pete was in Ukraine providing medical care to injured Ukrainian servicemembers and civilians, putting his own life in danger to try and save others, when he was killed in a missile strike.

Pete dedicated his life to helping people in need. In the Marine Corps, Pete did two tours in Helmand, Afghanistan. Following his service, he joined Team Rubicon to help his neighbors recover from Superstorm Sandy and ended up beginning a new career as a paramedic.

His wife Alex described Pete as always placing others' needs above his own and committing himself and serving to benefit others. Pete was also highly involved in the founding of Global Response Medicine, to provide emergency medical care for "the world's most vulnerable people in the midst of conflict, war, or disaster." That same drive to serve is what took Pete to Ukraine, to help people who were under siege by one man's egotistical quest for warmongering.

Pete was a kind soul who inspired the people around him and brought peace and calm to the people he touched. We were lucky to have Pete as part of our community. His courage and compassion are examples that we all can and should follow in our own lives. Our sympathies are with Alex, Pete's entire family, his friends, and for anyone who knew him and are grieving for his loss. It's clear that he had a profound impact on New Jersey and on the world. Pete will be missed.

HONORING IRVIN LEWIS COIN

HON. GREG STANTON

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 2023

Mr. STANTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Irvin Lewis Coin—an educator, philanthropist, and community leader in my home state of Arizona. Irvin was a member of the Hopi Tribe and devoted his life to ensuring that young people, regardless of their background or social status, had the opportunity to pursue higher education. Throughout his 40-year career, he helped change the lives of many and my state, and our nation, is a better place because of him.

Irvin grew up in a one-bedroom house just steps away from the railroad tracks along the historic Route 66 in Winslow. Early in life, he learned to play the trumpet—and he was good at it too. His musical talent helped him earn a scholarship to Arizona State University in Tempe, and he graduated in 1958 with a bachelor's degree in education. Irvin began teaching in public high schools in the Phoenix area, and after earning his master's degree,

he became the first director of ASU TRIO, where he laid the groundwork for ASU's TRIO Programs at the university. Because of his work, thousands of low-income, first-generation college students and students with disabilities have been empowered with the tools to achieve their highest aspirations.

Irvin also served as the president of the Western Association of Educational Opportunity Personnel Board of Directors, where he worked to ensure educational opportunities through the members that represented the TRIO program personnel. He strived to create what he called "an army of leaders whose purpose is to change the world." Today, students and teachers across the nation benefit from Irvin's philanthropy—and his visionary leadership has created intergenerational prosperity and opportunity for families in Arizona.

Arizona owes a debt of gratitude to Irvin, who we lost at the age of 82 on February 24. His commitment to making a difference in the lives of others will be felt for generations to come. In this spirit of gratitude and remembrance, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Irvin Lewis Coin.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CHARLIE DOWD

HON. RYAN K. ZINKE

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 2023

Mr. ZINKE. Mr. Speaker, Montana and Americans everywhere lost a great patriot, warrior, and servant with the passing of Mr. Charles A. "Charlie" Dowd, radioman, U.S. Navy.

Born in Rochester, NY, and later calling Montana home, Charlie was the son of a World War I veteran and enlisted in the Navy while he was in high school. At age 17 he received his orders and was assigned to duty at Pearl Harbor. On the evening of December 6, 1941, Dowd reported for duty at 2330. He worked through the night before returning to his barracks at daybreak.

Dowd awoke to America under attack. In just his T-shirt and boxer shorts he grabbed his rifle and brass and took position on the roof. He fired so many rounds at attacking Japanese combatants that his rifle barrel burned like his anger. As Dowd recalled some years later, "I didn't have any fear at the time," he said. "We were angry." It was that courage and anger and love of country that eventually led us to victory in the Pacific and Europe.

There were 2,403 service members and civilians who died that day, and 14 of them were from Montana. As one of the few survivors on the attack at Pearl Harbor, he continued his military service on vessels in the Pacific Theater in the Solomon Islands and New Guinea until the end of the war and was discharged in 1945.

For his military service, he was awarded multiple Bronze Stars and several other commendations.

I had the honor of visiting Dowd over the years. Listening to his stories and the stories of the men he served with are humbling and moving. More than 70 years later at 99 years old, he could still tap to the messages he sent as a radioman in Morse code on the table we visited on in Anaconda.

In Charlie's time after war, he continued his second life of service as a high school teacher for building trades where he filled young minds with memories they still talk about today. He leaned into his passion as a sportsman by spending time hunting, fishing, and writing a weekly column named 'The Wild Side' which became a staple for the Western Montana community.

Charlie's life with his wife Clara was the epitome of the American dream and our state was made a better place because they called it home. History will know Charlie Dowd as one of the last living survivors of the attack on Pearl Harbor, a Montana legend, and true American hero.

INTRODUCTION OF THE VETERANS EQUAL ACCESS ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 2023

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today Representative MAST and I introduced the Veterans Equal Access Act. This legislation would provide equal access to state-legal medical marijuana for veterans participating in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care. It ends the harmful VA prohibition on doctors and health care providers giving opinions or recommendations on, or completing forms for, state-legal medical marijuana programs.

U.S. cannabis laws are broken, including our laws that govern veterans' access to medical cannabis. Many veterans report using cannabis for medical purposes as a substitute for prescription drugs. The VA National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has acknowledged that veterans use cannabis to relieve symptoms of PTSD, and that in many states PTSD is a qualifying condition for enrollment in medical cannabis programs.

Most states with state-legal medical cannabis programs require some sort of recommendation or approval from a medical provider for patients to enroll in the program. However, VA policy prevents VA physicians and care providers from any participation, including helping with the required paperwork or forms.

This forces veterans to seek care outside of the VA system to receive medical cannabis recommendations, which can interrupt continuity of care, lead to mistakes or gaps in care, and require veterans to pay out of pocket for additional physician visits. VA physicians should not be denied the ability to offer a recommendation that they think may meet the needs of their patients. And veterans should not be forced outside the VA system to seek treatment that is legal in their state.

The Veterans Equal Access Act would allow VA doctors and healthcare providers to give their opinions or recommendations on medical cannabis and to complete forms in compliance with state-legal medical marijuana programs.

I look forward to working with my co-leads, Representative BRIAN MAST and Senators JACKY ROSEN, and my colleagues in the House and Senate to enact this legislation and provide equal access to state-legal medical cannabis for our veterans participating in VA health care.

HONORING THE SOUTH HAMPTON ROADS BAR ASSOCIATION ON ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 2023

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the South Hampton Roads Bar Association on its 100th Anniversary.

The South Hampton Roads Bar Association, initially called the Tidewater Bar Association, was formed in October 1923 to empower African American attorneys in the Hampton Roads region of Virginia. Members of the association promoted the advancement of African Americans in the Commonwealth of Virginia and fought against the unjust practices of segregation and racial discrimination.

As one of the oldest African American bar associations in the nation, the South Hampton Roads Bar Association remains active and supports racial equality within the legal community in the Hampton Roads area. It is comprised of members that have distinguished themselves as devoted Commonwealth Attorneys, state and federal judges, members of the Virginia General Assembly and city councils. Through their present work, they are continuing the legacy of the founding members to strive towards racial equality and to build a community focused on opportunities for all.

I want to thank Attorney W. Marcus Scriven, the current President of the South Hampton Roads Bar Association, for his leadership and dedication to the organization's mission. I also want to thank all prior presidents and the many African American legal professionals who laid the foundation for this association to thrive for so long.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to congratulate the member of the South Hampton Roads Bar Association on the many hard-fought battles won since their inception 100 years ago and wish them many more years of success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL POSEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 2023

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 167, I mistakenly voted no when I intended to vote yes.

RECOGNIZING THE CAREER OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER L.C. "BUCKSHOT" SMITH

HON. BRUCE WESTERMAN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 2023

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the distinguished career of long-time law enforcement Officer L.C. "Buckshot" Smith of the Camden Police Department. This week, at 93 years old, Officer Smith will be retiring after over 60 years of invaluable service to the people of Camden, Arkansas.

Officer Smith's dedication to protecting and serving the people of his community goes deeper than just his badge; it's in his heart. His true character has been evident through the relationships he's built within the community he's served for so long. Throughout his record-long career, Officer Smith has treated everyone in Camden with the utmost fairness and respect. He's held the nickname "Buckshot" for most of his life, and everyone in Camden knows him as such.

While he will surely be missed by the Camden Police Department, his 60-plus years of service will be remembered forever. Officer Smith is a beloved member of the community, and his legacy will go down in history as one that was built on the Golden Rule to treat others as you would want to be treated.

I'm proud to recognize Officer L.C. "Buckshot" Smith for his historic career in law enforcement, and I want to thank him for making such a deep and lasting impact on his community, the 4th District of Arkansas, and our country. I hope his record of service will be an inspiration to all who follow in his footsteps.

HONORING YVETTE BENARROCH

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 2023

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Women's History Month, I rise today to recognize Yvette Benarroch whose lifelong dedication toward serving her country and her community has had a significant impact on Southwest Florida.

Born in Luquillo, Puerto Rico, Yvette began her time in public service in the United States Air Force, serving in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm before returning to Puerto Rico. After earning her bachelor's degree in marketing from Interamerican University of Puerto Rico and attaining her master's degree in marketing from Southern New Hampshire University, Yvette began her professional career in public relations and education. She later became a successful entrepreneur.

However, Yvette never lost her servant-leader spirit inspired by her time in service to her country. She maintains that her "service to her country has no expiration date." Since moving to Naples, Florida in 2003, Yvette has served as a volunteer and board member in various local nonprofit organizations, further investing in her community by coordinating several hurricane relief efforts and food collection drives. When her community needed her the most, Yvette was always there. Yvette's staunch commitment toward helping her community has been both an inspiration and a blessing to those around her.

Motivated by her love of country, her conservative values, and her dedication to service, Yvette soon found herself involved in local, state, and federal politics. Additionally, Yvette also served as Vice Chairwoman for the Collier County GOP from 2020 to 2022 and was a former State Vice Chairwoman for the Republican National Hispanic Assembly of Florida. Today, she is the second Vice President for the Florida Federation of Republican Women.

Yvette's persistent drive to continue her involvement in her community, specifically in